

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PRS-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SAM-01 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

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O R 031659Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6165

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 01838

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, NATO

SUBJECT: FRG MEDIA COVERAGE REPORTING EXCHANGE OF
LETTERS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND WILLY BRANDT

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON FEBRUARY 2, THE GERMAN MEDIA REPORTED
AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS IN MID-JANUARY BETWEEN SECRETARY
KISSINGER AND SPD CHAIRMAN BRANDT CONCERNING COMMUNIST
PARTICIPATION IN WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS. "SPIEGEL"
CITED THE KISSINGER LETTER AS EVIDENCE THAT THE
SECRETARY WAS NOT CRITICAL OF THE SPD. IT SEEMS LIKELY
THAT SPD HEADQUARTERS LEAKED THE STORY IN AN ATTEMPT
TO DIFFUSE CDU/CSU CRITICISM OF WILLY BRANDT'S POSITION
ON THE ISSUE OF RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST PARTIES. END
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SUMMARY.

1. A THREE COLUMN ARTICLE IN THE FEBRUARY 2 "DER SPIEGEL" ENTITLED "DISCRETE CONTACTS" REPORTS A JANUARY EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER AND SPD CHAIRMAN BRANDT. THE ARTICLE DESCRIBED THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE SPD (CHIEFLY BRANDT) AND THE OPPOSITION CONCERNING CONTACTS BETWEEN WEST GERMAN POLITICAL LEADERS AND EUROPEAN COMMUNIST FIGURES. THE ARTICLE ALSO NOTES THAT BRANDT HAS A "GOOD CHARACTER WITNESS" IN THE PERSON OF SECRETARY KISSINGER BY VIRTUE OF THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO BRANDT IN MID-JANUARY.

2. THE KISSINGER LETTER, ACCORDING TO "SPIEGEL", PRAISED BRANDT'S AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, PAST SUPPORT FOR NATO. THE ARTICLE STATES THAT THE SECRETARY WROTE BRANDT THAT SPD POLICIES WERE IN NO WAY THE CAUSE OF HIS CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPE. RATHER, "SPIEGEL" NOTES, THE SECRETARY RECOGNIZED IN HIS LETTER THAT BRANDT AND THE SPD HAVE RESISTED "TENDENCIES" THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TAKEN SERIOUSLY ENOUGH IN OTHER PARTS OF WESTERN EUROPE.

3. ACCORDING TO THE "SPIEGEL" ARTICLE, THE FOUR-PAGE LETTER WAS TRANSMITTED BY AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND, OPENS WITH THE SALUTION "DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN" AND CLOSES WITH "WARM REGARDS." ACCORDING TO THE "FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU" (FEB. 2), THE SECRETARY'S LETTER WAS DELIVERED JANUARY 14 AND A REPLY WAS GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND ON JANUARY 23. SPD SPOKESMAN SCHWARTZ CONFIRMED THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS AS DID CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT ON EVENING TELEVISION ON FEB. 2.

4. COMMENT: THE DISCLOSURE OF AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS WAS OBVIOUSLY LEAKED BY SPD HEADQUARTERS TO DIFFUSE CRITICISM FROM THE CDU/CSU OF BRANDT'S STATEMENT IN A "SPIEGEL" INTERVIEW DEFENDING "INFORMATION CONTACTS" BETWEEN WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL LEADERS AND THEIR COMMUNIST COUNTERPARTS. THE OPPOSITION HAS PORTRAYED BRANDT'S STATEMENT AS THE FIRST STEP DOWN THE SLIPPERY SLOPE LEADING TO
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COMMUNIST PARTY PARTICIPATION
IN WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS.
CASH

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 03 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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